

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
(ADOPTED 12/13/04)**

**WORKSESSION & SPECIAL SESSION
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Monday, February 2, 2004

OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Mayor Porter
Councilmember Austin-Lane
Councilmember Barry
Councilmember Elrich
Councilmember Mizeur
Councilmember Seamens
Councilmember Williams

City Manager Finn
City Clerk Waters
Deputy City Manager Hobbs
Public Works Director Lott
Community & Government Liaison Ludlow
Recreation Director Haiduven
Human Resources Manager Hampton
Police Chief Creamer
Captain Coursey
Captain Hubbard
Police Administrative Supervisor Pullet
Treasurer McKenzie
Library Director Arnold-Robbins
Communications Manager Moffet
Information Systems Manager Castillo

The Council convened at 7:34 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Porter noted that at Councilmembers' request the special session is scheduled for the end of the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

WORKSESSION

1. Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA)

Bob Atwood, president of OTBA, briefed the Council on the status of the Maryland Main Street Program application, due March 1. Mr. Atwood thanked the City for their help with the application. He described OTBA's outreach efforts, and work on obtaining the required matching funds for the Main Street application.

Dan Robinson and the treasurer of OTBA mentioned that OTBA is preparing some recommendations for the City Council on parking issues in the area.

Mr. Seamens commented on the Zip Car and Flex Car opportunities in the area.

Mr. Seamens asked about the boundaries of the Main Street application area. He asked it if would be possible to include some of the Ward 4 businesses in the area.

Mr. Atwood indicated that they were looking at the area from 4th Street to Takoma Junction. Part of the program is that they identify a specific area with businesses and historic buildings and focus revitalization on that specific area, with the hope that the surrounding areas will also experience the benefits.

2. Maryland Main Street Application.

Ms. Daines noted that the Council agenda package includes a draft of the application. There is a very tight turn-around time with the deadline of March 1. There are a couple of requirements to note. There is a town meeting on February 18 at 7:30 pm in the Chambers. We will be working with the OTBA to get notice out to the community. The Council will be asked to adopt a resolution of support for the application. There is a three year commitment and a financial commitment that goes with it. She noted the \$25,000 match required of City and OTBA. She has included some background information on the program and the benefits of participating. The program is an approach to economic restructuring. There are additional technical services associated with the program.

Mr. Seamens asked if the program manager would be an additional financial obligation to the City?

Ms. Daines replied that, in some cities, it is a staff person. However, the State recommends that the program manager be within OTBA. There should be a store front in the district itself.

Mr. Seamens asked about staff time related to the program?

Ms. Daines replied, yes, she did anticipate some staff involvement. She did not see current efforts increasing. The workload overall will increase, but a fair amount of the work would fall

on OTBA. The City would serve in an advisory role and assist with programs.

Ms. Austin-Lane asked how we arrived at the \$25,000 amount?

Ms. Daines said we did a ball park estimate about what it would cost to staff this project, based on the information from the other cities. There is more work than there are hours in the day. These positions are often filled by volunteers and not highly paid.

Ms. Porter commented that it is the same type of position that Erwin Mack holds with the CDA. It would be someone who represents the association and keeps you informed.

Ms. Austin-Lane reported that the Historic Takoma supports the application. There will also be a DC application in the near future. She asked if we know anything about what the District provides?

Response from female. It is a 5 year program (\$80,000, \$60,000, \$40,000, \$40,000 and \$20,000) with a 2 to 1 matching requirement.

Ms. Daines said that because the association straddles the Maryland/DC line, a lot of the information compiled for the Maryland application can be used for the District application.

Bob Atwood noted that the State stresses that this is a long-term process.

Ms. Daines said OTBA has made some great strides in the last 12 months. She is very impressed. They have done a great job.

Ms. Porter said the resolution of support is scheduled for the Council meeting next week.

Ms. Austin-Lane asked if there is any text developed for the application at this time.

Ms. Daines replied, no. Council would be voting on the application in theory.

Penny _____ said there are a series of questions that are posed to the stakeholders. Some of the responses will come out of the community meeting next week.

Ms. Daines agreed to put a copy of the blank application in the Council package for the next meeting.

There was Council consensus to consider the resolution.

3. City Manager Selection Process

Presented by Jim Mercer (Consultant) and Robert Lanza and Dan Robinson (representing the City Manager Selection Committee).

Ms. Porter noted that she attended the last committee meeting and that she observed that they have done a great deal of work.

Robert Lanza noted that the Council has the product of the work of the Qualifications Committee. We focused on four different attributes, one of which is the education/technical. Then we have management and two categories of Council and public interaction. These categories were developed from the “angles” the members were approaching the task. He said he did not prioritize the criteria due to time constraints but felt that the prioritization process would happen through the evaluation of resumes.

Ms. Porter noted that this is an opportunity for Council feedback.

Mr. Williams made some suggestions on the language in the document.

Mr. Elrich asked if we are ruling out people who have not previously been City Managers? This potentially narrows the scope to only two types of candidates, former City Managers or department heads who managed 75 or more employees.

Jim Mercer said, it would not be uncommon for a City to have 75-100 employees. The City Manager would not manage those employees directly, but would have lower level supervisors.

Robert Lanza said the committee wants to have a City Manager who has had interaction with a relatively large city and experience managing lots of staff and a sizable budget.

Mr. Elrich said they might have a hypothetical situation where a candidate could come from a larger city and who was a departmental head of a department with a budget comparable to the overall City budget. We would hope not to lose that management experience component in a candidate.

Robert Lanza said he could work on that language.

Mr. Elrich said, the candidate needs to understand the politics and ethos that have been involved in a lot of the City policies and be comfortable with them.

Mr. Lanza agreed that the committee was trying to get at that point. We have listed a number of elements that will be taken into consideration. There are a number of unique factors about the Takoma Park that are linked to a number of the activities that the City Manager would have to be involved in.

Dan Robinson noted that no one is going to meet all of these qualifications. We are trying to help Jim Mercer develop a profile, not only of a perfect manager but the kind of city that we are. In a sense, we are attempting to educate the applicant about who we are so that they have a notion about who we are when they come to visit us. This is part of trying to develop a profile of the city.

Mr. Seamens said he thinks it is more the general feel of the community and its profile. The person has to feel comfortable in a community that has liberal leanings, diverse population, diverse staff, environmental sensitivity, etc.

Mr. Lanza said commented that we want someone who will come in and enthusiastically implement City policy.

Mr. Barry commented that the committee has done a tremendous job. The level of detail is impressive. In the realm of things to look for, we have some challenges in terms of revenue generation. It would be good to look for a City Manager who has demonstrated a record of creative strategies for generating revenues. Secondly, the City is very interested in communications. We have a lot of communications vehicles in the City (e.g., Newsletter, Cable, etc.). I would like to see some demonstrated ability in managing these channels with good and positive results.

Mr. Williams noted that this has been identified as a Council Goal.

Mr. Robinson said the committee should also include the Council's FY05 Goals in this exercise.

Ms. Austin-Lane agreed with other Council comments. She recognized the time and work of the committee.

Mr. Lanza said the committee intends to reword the focus to make the scope more broad and include municipal, county and possible state level candidates.

Mr. Robinson said they had also talked about "non-traditional" candidates.

Mr. Lanza said they discussed this at great length. A lot of sub-committee members are coming at this discussion from different angles. We ended up with going back to our qualifications statement and after finalizing this list (something Jim Mercer can use for profile and something that the Council can use in setting up evaluation criteria), we will set the process that any non-traditional candidate could apply through.

Mr. Robinson commented that he wants to look at other towns that are sympatico for candidates. We have someone who has worked on such a list.

Ms. Porter noted all of the work of the committee and thanked them for their work so far.

Jim Mercer expressed his thanks for being able to work with Takoma Park. He met with the committee on January 22 and was very impressed with the individuals on the committee. It is a good fit for us to work together collectively. He distributed a draft of the recruitment brochure. The portion in the back that talks about the candidate, which the selection committee just covered, is the older version. He provided an overview of the document. We use an attractive, but not overly expensive, brochure to attract applicants who might not otherwise apply. There is a section on the City as a place to live and work. He asked for the Council to review and get comments to Ms. Hampton. This was drawn from information developed by the City. He also wants to be sure that the wording is going to attract the right candidates. There is also information about the City as a public entity. He asked that they check the characterization. There is a section about the job position, it is right out of the job description and the City Charter. There will be a section added to identify the goals of the City. We still need that information. When we are ready to publish this as a recruitment tool we want to ensure you that we have all of the information included. He invited the Council to review it in the next couple of days.

He briefly covered the schedule developed by the committee and the Council. We are contemplating getting started with the search process roughly early in February. We would like to get going with the process by next week. If we need to delay, we can do that. We want to start around February 9 but that may not be feasible, given that we still need to get the feedback on Council Goals. The recruitment will take about 45 days. Our experience is that this has been about the right amount of time. He said he would then need a few days to do a preliminary review of candidates. We would then get together with the committee and start going through a review process. We would then be in a position to present preliminary candidates to the Council by about April 15. Depending on the Council's response, we would conduct background checks between April 15 and May 1, and then be ready to begin interviews. This is a very milestone oriented schedule. We can put more specifics in the schedule once we have the Council reaction.

Ms. Porter asked if background checks are done prior to the Council's interviews of the candidates?

Jim Mercer replied, typically, yes. With the budget we have for the project, we cannot do reference/background checks on a large number of people. If we do not do the checks prior to the Council interviews, we may find that an attractive candidate has something undesirable in their background. We could do interactive video with some candidates. It is a fairly well refined technique used these days. Sometimes we see things on camera that we do not see when we meet with a person for an interview.

Ms. Porter asked the committee if they've thought about how to conduct the evaluation process.

Mr. Robinson said we will look to Jim Mercer for some guidance.

Mr. Lanza said they did not get into a deep discussion of this topic. He did talk about the need

for a general discussion about how we will look at individual applicants (using the list and other things to evaluate the candidates).

Ms. Porter said, based on past experience, we will need to deal with the question about the salary level.

Mr. Mercer said it is important to deal with it fairly quickly. He noted that he is in the process of interviewing each of the Councilmembers and that he is touching on this point. He noted that there is nothing specific in the profile. The advantage is that it gives some flexibility to negotiate. He needs some general guidelines about the Council's tolerance level for the salary range. Some of that has to do with the area's market. As we talk, we should explore that issue.

Ms. Porter said, it will help to have this discussion prior to the interviews.

Mr. Seamens asked, when do we schedule that discussion?

Ms. Porter said, she is getting the sense that Jim Mercer is first discussing this and other things with each member of Council.

Mr. Mercer said, after talking with all of the Councilmembers, he can put a range in the document. We could put Mr. Finn's salary in the document.

Ms. Mizeur asked what is typical of a jurisdiction of this size with the area's market?

Mr. Mercer said he did this search in College Park a couple of years ago. It was over \$100,000.

Ms. Hampton said we are pulling together information from other jurisdictions.

Mr. Mercer noted the Rockville salary range. It was significantly over \$100,000. The City has been in the \$100,000 range with an attractive benefits package. Part of a candidate's ability to come here has to do with affordability.

Ms. Mizeur said she would think that with the shift in housing costs over the past 5 years the salary should have gone up significantly.

Mr. Mercer commented on some package scenarios.

Ms. Porter said the Council and the community need to be thinking about things like this. It was an issue last time and it will again be an issue.

Mr. Williams said we did have some experience last time in being flexible about how to deal with it. There might put an indicator in the profile e.g. "Low \$100,000 with the flexibility to negotiate benefits."

Mr. Mercer said he was more comfortable with some type of number to better target the desired audience.

Ms. Porter said she appreciated this information. She thinks that Mr. Mercer's participation will be extremely helpful.

BREAK

The Council recessed for a scheduled break at 8:56 p.m. and later convened again in worksession.

4. City Services.

Mr. Finn commented that this presentation is preparation for the upcoming FY05 budget process. There is a slide presentation with a tremendous amount of information. He will not attempt to go through all of the information tonight. He has asked the Departmental Heads to only point out pertinent information related to specific slides. This year, as last year, we anticipate that there will be some fiscal issues. Revenues from the County and State will again be tight. We anticipate additional cut-backs at the State level. There may be further cuts at the County level. We do not have revenue projections for FY05 at this time. We hope to provide some estimates in another month.

Mr. Finn noted that the information presented this evening is based on adopted FY04 revenues and expenditures. Copies of the materials can be obtained upon request. He began the presentation with a breakout of the revenues, dollar amounts and percent of total. He noted the County and State contributions to various departments. The City is paying a significant portion of the Public Works budget; would have to negotiate the County rebate along with other municipalities to change the formula. The County's position on Recreation is that they would not provide any additional recreation services if we were to do away with our services. They are not willing to increase the rebate. We do receive Library aid from the County; it is not a rebate. The county's position is that if the City were to do away with the Library, they could handle the library services for Takoma Park residents.

Ms. Porter noted that getting the amount of library aid that we got was quite a fight. The County feels that our library is totally superfluous. She noted the loss of some Highway User funds in FY04, asking if the presentation shows the reduced amount?

Mr. Finn responded, yes. We lost about one-third of it last year. There is the potential to lose even more this year.

Mr. Hobbs led off the presentation of the budget expenditures. The City expects a 13-20% increase in health benefits costs this year.

Mr. Finn commented that a 20% increase would be about \$200,000.

Mr. Hobbs continued with charges breaking out the departmental costs and FTE's (2080 hours or 1 person per year), Debt Service, Council, Legal, Capital Improvement Program (CIP), Special Revenue, and Non-Departmental costs (broken-out by employee-related costs, insurance costs, commissions/festivals, and Council Goals).

Ms. Mizeur asked what is included in bad debt cost.

Ms. McKenzie explained that this includes uncollected taxes, stormwater fees, refuse billings, etc. The rental license collections work better since it was taken over by the County.

Mr. Hobbs continued with his presentation, including General Government.

Ms. Waters noted the uncaptured costs associated with agenda management.

Ms. Porter asked about legislation management.

Ms. Waters explained that this refers to recodification, code supplements, resolution/ordinance drafting, etc.

Mr. Hobbs continued with Information Systems and the Police Department.

Mr. Elrich asked about the difference in patrol services and calls for service.

Captain Coursey responded that both are integral components of the patrol officer's duties.

Ms. Porter asked about how Community Oriented Policing was valued. Chief Creamer responded.

Mr. Williams asked about traffic control. Chief Creamer responded.

Mr. Hobbs continued with the presentation on Public Works.

Mr. Elrich asked for clarification about the source of monies for Roads & Sidewalk Maintenance and the Crack Sealing Program.

Mr. Lott responded that the \$500,000 CIP allocation is for the long-term infrastructure program. In response to a comment received from resident Alian Thery, he explained how fuel costs are separated out for all vehicles and that trash collection as a service reflects personnel and other service related components.

Mr. Finn said he provided this information based on departmental services. He said he can refine it in much greater detail if requested by the Council.

Mr. Seamens asked why the CDA cleaning is broken-out separately?

Mr. Lott said that they hire a seasonal worker each year whose salary is matched by the CDA to clean-up in that area.

Mr. Hobbs pointed out that we budget an estimate on snow removal. Based on this year's weather, we can be assured that we will exceed that budget item this year.

Ms. Mizeur commented that this is an area in the budget that we tend to be a little loose (i.e., budget down knowing that we will do what we have to do to cover the costs).

Mr. Finn agreed, it is a little of both. We know that some years, we will have extra money in the budget. This and last year, we will exceed the amount budgeted for these items. There are other areas in the budget where we will come back and ask the Council to approve transfers.

Ms. Porter said that we also have the unappropriated reserve. How do you estimate the snow removal costs?

Mr. Lott responded that we try to base it on past years. We spent about \$80,000 last year. We expect to exceed this year's budget.

Mr. Finn commented on recycling, we have a very high compliance with the recycling program.

Mr. Finn noted that on event support, costs show up in several departments. These are things that we budget for (e.g., folk festival, street festival, etc.).

Mr. Williams asked for clarification on vehicles in the Public Works budget. He noted that there were no capital vehicle purchases approved in the budget, so we will not see vehicular costs in other departments.

Mr. Finn clarified, this would be another area where would have to refine the numbers (as with fuel which is not spread across departments). We could look at fuel, vehicles and insurance. He noted that police vehicles are not included under the police department service costs.

Mr. Elrich said he would be interested in fuel costs and vehicle repair costs broken out by department.

Mr. Finn agreed to do this.

Ms. Ludlow said that the Montgomery County Police Rebate includes money for leased police cars.

Mr. Elrich asked for clarification on expenditures for the street lights?

Mr. Finn replied it includes maintenance and the electrical cost.

Mr. Elrich asked why we don't give the street lights back to Montgomery County?

Mr. Finn clarified, part of the County's public works formula includes their estimate of how many lights they would provide in the City. There are some serious problems with their formula. The City has tried on several occasions to rally the other municipalities to approach a discussion of that rebate. We had Rockville and Gaithersburg managers here to discuss this issue, but it was not high on their priority list.

Ms. Porter said that was likely because of the probability of being unsuccessful.

Mr. Williams said that if we were to give street lights back to the County, we would have to deal with the frustration of PEPCO and possibly, the added frustration of dealing with the County for more street lights.

Mr. Elrich said he wanted more information on the formula as it relates to street lights.

Mr. Finn said he can go back and examine this. This is one of the areas where we are not getting a fair rebate from Montgomery County.

Ms. Mizeur said she had asked last week if she could have a series of scenarios related to rebates. She invited a future discussion. Ms. Mizeur said she wants a list of the things that if we did not do, the County would be obligated to do. Are we getting rebates? What are we paying for service? Etc.

Mr. Elrich agreed. He wants to know where we match-up with the County.

Mr. Williams said if there is something in the rebate formula about "x" street lights per mile of road, reimbursed at "y" rate, then are there different considerations given to urban and rural areas? Or is it just a straight formula?

Mr. Finn said he can bring some of that information back, but it will take some time.

Mr. Seamens said he would find it useful to get a copy of the rebate formulas.

Mr. Finn said he has a year-old police formula and there is an public works formula.

Mr. Elrich said he asked for information about all of the formulas. If we do not get rebates, we should pursue legal action against the County for the appropriate rebate.

Ms. Porter said, the political problem is that we are the only entity that the County pays for a police rebate. The problem with other rebates is that the County would have to negotiate with all of the government entities in the County.

Mr. Hobbs continued with the presentation of Recreation services.

Mr. Finn noted that there are revenues that come in for programming costs.

Mr. Elrich said it would be helpful to have a column that matches revenues against services.

Ms. Porter said that recreation works different than other services. We could forgo paying the recreation tax to the County but the last time that the recreation committee analyzed the numbers, it was a benefit to the City to pay the tax and continue receiving the rebate.

Ms. Haiduven explained the MOU with the County for the \$100,000.

Mr. Elrich recalled the history of Council discussions, recognizing that program fees would not cover the program costs.

Ms. Mizeur asked for a document that tracks the attendance and other factors related to the programs.

Ms. Haiduven referred to the budget narrative. She commented on the recreation facilities/fields service. Recreation only takes care of maintenance on the two athletic fields. Public Works handles parks and playgrounds.

Mr. Hobbs continued with Housing and Community Development.

Ms. Daines provided overall comments. We are budgeted for 12.1 FTE's but in reality we have 9.5 FTE's. In some areas, the costs for services are high because we end up contracting out. She noted that there are some programs that involve other sources of funding.

Mr. Elrich asked about the number of rental units that are inspected.

Mr. Finn noted the impact of biennial inspections (incentive for property owners to keep them maintained).

Ms. Porter said those units are not inspected each year so it should not cost us.

Ms. Daines said regardless of how many inspections the County does each year, it still costs us "x" amount each year. One thing that is happening is that a lot of the properties on the biennial program are being put back on the annual inspection program. We have about \$250,000 budgeted for rental licensing inspections and \$40,000 budgeted for commercial inspections. We have taken a lot of time this year to pull together the Landlord Certification Program and do the exams; this does not include any of the Landlord Tenant staff who have been engaged in this process. Commercial licensing has not yet been implemented because of some software problems; we still hopes to get it implemented this year. Since Ron Vaughn departed we have reorganized and will be cutting back on the GIS mapping services. Under CDBG and Program Open Space (POS) services, Public Works costs are not built in to the costs. Mediation primarily includes Landlord Tenant working with Chap.6., Art. 4., resolving landlord-tenant

disputes. We get about \$40,000 each year through the POS program. The program is in big trouble at the State level.

Mr. Hobbs moved on to Communications.

Ms. Moffet said the newsletter is contracted so no FTE's are attributed. We are evolving this year with the new communications office. The web management slide does not reflect the efforts/costs in other departments (Police, Recreation, and Library). We also have money in the Council Goals line item that is not reflected in this budget. We receive cable franchise fees which are not reflected. They come as a special grant that we would not get if we did not have a cable channel (approx. \$150,000).

Ms. Mizeur questioned the overall cost of the newsletter.

Ms. Moffet said it does not include a small part of her time for checking the articles at the staff level. It does not include staff writing hours.

Mr. Seamens said he would like to have a revenue/fees column in the presentation of all the department areas.

Ms. Waters provided further clarification that the revenue charts only addressed county/state "rebates," not other revenue streams.

Mr. Hobbs continued with the Library.

Ms. Arnold-Robbins gave an opening comment about the high allocation for Readers' Services (i.e., 2-3 staff on floor at all times when the library is open).

Ms. Mizeur said she looks forward to seeing more information about actual revenues/expenditures in the future.

Mr. Finn made his closing comments.

Ms. Porter said she thinks that these break-outs of city services were very helpful. Will we see the proposed budget broken out at this level?

Mr. Finn said he did not think that it would be too difficult, but would first need to hear about the Council's FY05 goals. As we get further into the process, we will have better information about the revenue projections. We already know that we are looking at a wage increase of about 2%. We can estimate that health insurance will increase by 15%. The expenditure side will be easier than the revenue side because of the instability at County and State levels. If those sources go down, especially at the State level, we will have to decide where to make up that money. In local government, you have very few resources in how to make up those dollars. One source is a property tax increase, which is not desirable.

Ms. Porter said she needs to hear from the Council about how to proceed. Given where we are with the City Manager selection process, she suggested going forward with Council discussion of FY05 goals next week, skipping over the discussion of possible areas for reductions.

Mr. Seamens agreed.

Ms. Porter said she understands that the Council will hear from the staff about what various levels of reductions will look like.

Ms. Mizeur asked how you set goals without knowing what kind of revenues will come in?

Ms. Porter said the purpose of the goals are to set some priorities.

Mr. Finn said that once Council sets priorities, we then go back and make proposals about how to implement them within the projected revenues.

Ms. Mizeur gave a recap of the process as described. It makes more sense that we should think about what we can address within the revenue constraints and then set the goals.

Mr. Finn said that in a perfect world, he would agree. But we will not have the revenue numbers until much later in the process.

Ms. Porter said there are basic services we will provide, but then there are other priority areas. In terms of Affordable Housing, we say that among the things that ECD does, affordable housing initiatives are among the priorities.

Ms. Mizeur said it would be hard to sign off on Council goals if we do not know what we are weighing them against in terms of what else is included in the budget.

Ms. Porter said this is an excellent starting point for next week's discussion of Council goals. We do need to be realistic.

Mr. Elrich noted that we also have held City staff at its current size. If we add a new program, then we will have to absorb the work within the existing staff level.

Mr. Seamens said he has the same struggle. Over the last year, he has heard discussions about road maintenance which many would think of as a basic service. However, this has been perceived as having been short-changed for funding of other Council goals.

Mr. Elrich said every jurisdiction around here has a backlog of road maintenance. We tried to determine what it would take to evaporate the maintenance issues. If you look at road spending historically, it was once only about \$100,000 annually. Allocations have increased.

Ms. Porter said she thinks that it was funded at \$92,000 when the first study of road conditions

was conducted. The allocation was raised to \$300,000, and we are now up to \$500,000.

Mr. Williams said we could make improving roads a Council goal.

Mr. Finn said that Mr. Elrich made a good point about staff; keeping the programs within the existing staff level. You now have information that will equip you to make policy decisions about where to direct resources. Council will need to make some tough policy decisions about whether to continue all of the things that have been presented.

Mr. Seamens invited Mr. Finn to keep the Council aware of when staff is pushed beyond capacity.

Mr. Barry asked about the community center costs.

Mr. Finn said he will include the numbers in the FY05 budget for operating the Community Center. He will also invite discussion about capital costs. The library and recreation are talking about how to get things done without requiring more staff. It was not our intent to look at additional full-time staff. We had told Council that we would be looking at some half-time staff, maintenance, utility, etc. fees.

Ms. Austin-Lane asked if this is a change in plans. This is contrary to some of my residents' understanding.

Ms. Porter said it was agreed that we would not hire any full-time staff. We were provided some early-on information about the projected operating costs.

Mr. Finn said he will check on the projected operating costs. There was a whole list of potential costs and some potential revenues identified. County Executive Duncan had indicated that if we had a full senior program then we would get senior money, but changed circumstances at the County may change that. Mr. Finn said he will work with Recreation and Finance to put together some numbers.

Ms. Porter said we have begun some discussions with community groups who would be interested in assisting with some programs.

SPECIAL SESSION

5. 1st Reading Ordinance re: Wind Generated Electricity.

Deputy Public Works Director Braithwaite provided an overview of last week's discussion. The proposal last week was to purchase 50% of all electrical use at the offer given to the City. Knowing the financial impact that this will have, the group would like to see the City make a commitment to purchasing clean energy from here on out. Instead of the 50% approach, they would like to propose that we purchase 100% of energy for the municipal building. If you

continue to think along this line of support, we would propose 100% for the City building (a little less than the 50% proposal).

Ms. Porter asked how will the new community center affect this figure? It is supposed to be more energy efficient. If we want to set a precedent for future years, Ms. Braithwaite is saying that we might want to go forward with 100%.

Ms. Braithwaite noted that it would require a change to the the wording of the ordinance.

Mr. Williams said it is a switch of what we thought might be the better spin at last week's discussion.

Mike Tidwell said we were sensitive to the budget implication. This reduces the cost for this year and would be more of a media punch to post a sign declaring that 100% of this building's power is wind power.

Ms. Porter said, for this year, she agrees that whatever sounds better is fine. However, in the future, with the addition of the new building the 50% for all City buildings might be better.

Ms. Braithwaite noted the recommendation for the City to make a commitment to clean energy purchases over the long-term. She is looking for the Council to charge this ad hoc group to come back in a few months and report on a long-term approach.

Ms. Porter asked if this wouldn't fit in very well with what the energy task force was doing?

Ms. Braithwaite replied that it would. She commented on where that group let off.

Ms. Braithwaite said that one proposal from Wind Current was that they would give a special discount to residents/businesses if they purchased through Wind Current, and that they would give a credit to the City for its next purchase of wind power based on Takoma Park purchases. She noted a second proposal for a Takoma Park Energy Bank – a data collection of all who are taking steps with respect to energy conservation and clean energy use.

Albert Nunez said this dovetails nicely with the action plan as well.

Ms. Porter said, she thinks the two proposals fit together well.

Mr. Elrich asked what is the discount that is being offered?

Vendor Representative said he was not sure. The idea is being developed. The current rate is 2.5 cents per kilowatt in selling credits for another wind farm.

Ms. Braithwaite repeated that wind certificates are the only way to buy wind power.

Mike Tidwell explained how a grid was once used. When people started wanting a particular kind of power, you have to track the particular power, so you have to buy the credits.

Male said, with the average system price it is about 3 cents per kilowatt hour. For wind power, it is about 4.5 cents. The wind farmer has to sell the difference. He has to sell 100% of the wind cents in a year in order to make a plant cover its costs. Purchases help make wind companies solvent. A contractor (Mike) sells the remaining certificates on behalf of Ecellon (energy company).

Ms. Austin-Lane referred to Mike Tidwell's e-mail and the concern about the NOX Credits.

Mike Tidwell explained the nitrogen oxide credit program. It is a very good chance that the City will also be a recipient of NOX credits.

Mr. Elrich said he does not know that this will be effective to address air problems in this area.

Mike Tidwell said if we want to deal with cleaner air we have to deal with power plants. About one-third of the pollution comes from power plants to the west. We have to get to the first step of a clean energy environment.

Mr. Seamens said we would like to support the recommendation that the energy commission go back and look at a long-term strategy for clean air initiatives. For tonight's discussion, he thinks that part of the formula is other power sources. Wind power is moving in the right direction although is not the total answer. It is important for the City to try and push this forward by making a statement for the city and the future. He suggested that the Council move the ordinance with 100% of electric used by the City building.

Moved by Seamens; seconded by Williams.

Mr. Elrich said that his proposal would have been slightly different to this. He said that he has a problem with buying last year's energy; something that is basically gone. He will work on some language that would commit the City to future purchases of renewable energy. He wants the City to be in business of on-going renewable energy use.

Ms. Braithwaite said she would hope to have a program back in front of the Council before the next budget that would include other options in the package.

Mike Tidwell said he thought it would make sense to bring this offer to the Council. It is for pure power; it is a great offer.

Ms. Braithwaite said we can have more information for the Council as part of this budget process.

Mr. Williams said that tonight's information was helpful in getting him to the point of being

comfortable to support this and to understand the long-range plan (versus the short-term costs).

Ms. Porter encouraged the group to work on the two proposals. She thinks there will be interested persons.

Ms. Mizeur said she thinks that some of her concerns of last week have been incorporated in the program proposal.

Ms. Porter commented that we had a greenhouse emissions program back in 2000. We put together the task force to explore energy options. The City has had a long-term commitment to reducing emissions and providing cleaner energy. This is a way to make some strides toward cleaner energy in a way that is not too expensive. She said she does not agree with Mr. Elrich's characterization. Any time you buy something off of the shelf, it is something that the manufacturer has produced. It is consistent with the City's goals for cleaner energy.

Mr. Elrich said he would like to add a "whereas" clause that makes a long-term commitment to purchase from renewable energy sources in addition to the purchase through the County.

Both Mr. Seamens and Mr. Williams agreed.

Mr. Barry said Council should consider a goal that relates to the City's commitment to environmental concerns. This should be looked at holistically.

Ordinance #2004-5 was adopted unanimously (VOTING FOR: Porter, Austin-Lane, Barry, Elrich, Mizeur, Seamens, Williams).

ORDINANCE #2004-5
(Attached)

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned for the evening at 11:22 p.m.